



R & D NEWS



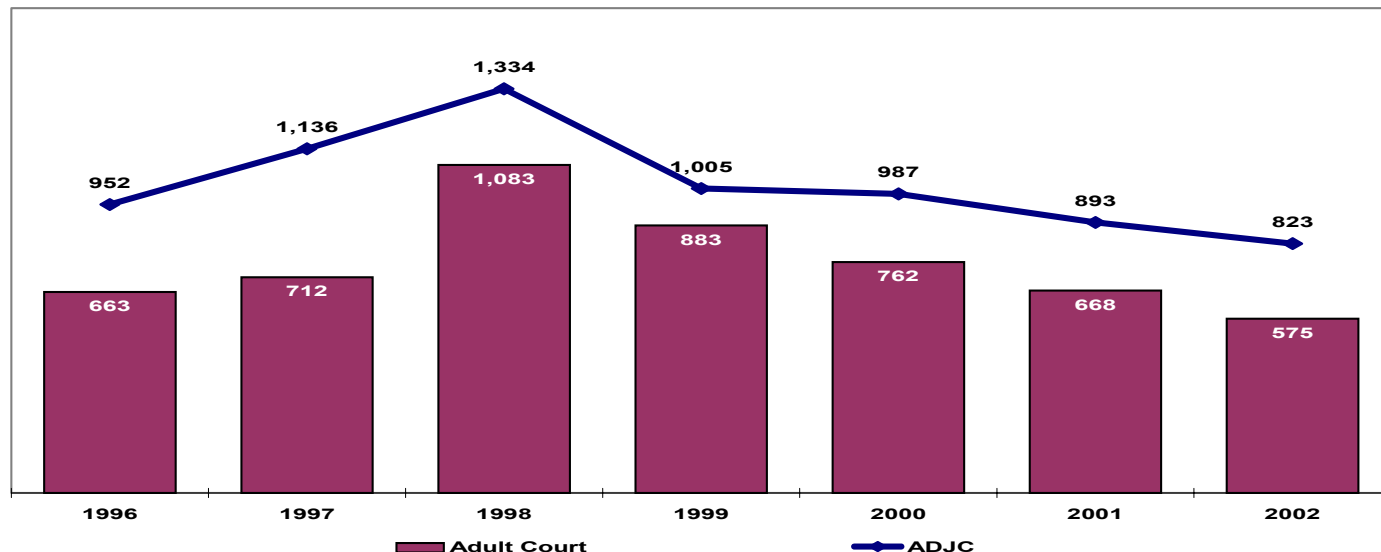
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JUVENILES SENT TO ADULT COURT OR ADJC: BY FISCAL YEAR



Statistical Analysis Center, Arizona Criminal Justice Commission, State of Arizona Youth Survey 2002, November 2002.

A survey of Arizona high school students found that alcohol is the most common substance used, and that more Arizona youth smoked marijuana in the month preceding the survey than smoked cigarettes. The Arizona Criminal Justice Commission (ACJC) conducted a random statewide survey of 12,203, 8th, 10th and 12th grade students in 43 Arizona public schools during 2002. They found that male students used alcohol, tobacco or other drugs more than females, however, more females (48.4%) used alcohol in the month preceding the survey than males (44.5%). Inhalant use peaked in middle school and declined significantly after the 8th grade. Meanwhile, use of other drugs increased with grade level. An overwhelming majority of Arizona students never try hallucinogens, methamphetamines, cocaine, steroids, heroin, barbiturates and ecstasy. The ACJC study incorporated 18 risk and 10 protective factor measures (from Hawkins and Catalano) into their survey "For a majority of the risk scales, Arizona youth had scores that were equal to or higher than the seven-state norm. This indicated that Arizona youth were at the same risk, or (were) at a higher risk, than national youth." Risk factors with the highest scores in Arizona included *perceived availability of drugs*, *peer attitudes favorable to antisocial behavior*, *academic failure and interaction with anti-social peers*. Meanwhile, "...the protective factor scores were equal to or less than the seven state norm. This indicated that Arizona youth were at the same level of protection, or (had) lower protection, than youth in the seven state sample." Arizona students had low protective scores in *community opportunities for prosocial involvement and community rewards for prosocial involvement*.

ARIZONA JUVENILE JUSTICE TRIVIA

How many juveniles in ADJC secure care have serious mental health issues?

Edward Zamble and Vernon Quinsey, The Criminal Recidivism Process, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Zamble and Quinsey were interested in what happened to adult offenders immediately before and during the occurrence of recidivism. The purpose of their study was to prepare a model of recidivism as an ongoing psychological process. They focused on a variety of specific antecedents which were behavioral, emotional or cognitive. Subjects for their study included 311 male inmates from Canada that were released from a prison and returned to custody for a serious offense within one year. They wanted to examine the hypothesis that offenders encounter the same problems as non-offenders and the difference between them is that the offenders have ineffective coping skills. Zamble and Quinsey found that their subjects tended to “attack” problems head-on and their attack was aimed at alleviating the problem for the moment. The offenders did not analyze problems nor weigh possible action alternatives. Offenders did not anticipate the consequences of their actions either. When presented with hypothetical problems the authors found that 66% of the offenders chose actions that would likely make their situation worse. Parole supervision was not found to be effective for this group of offenders, because most (55.6%) reported they violated their conditions within the first week of release. Emotionally, many of the offenders quickly moved from feelings of relief and optimism on being released from prison to defeat, anger and hopelessness. Anger was especially evident among their subjects on the days immediately preceding the recidivism offense date. Few of the offenders consciously planned their crime. In fact 83.4% of their subjects stated that they had not done any planning at all before they committed their offense. Most regularly used alcohol and illegal drugs. The combination of poor coping skills and substance abuse led to a downward spiral that ended in a new criminal offense. The authors recommend that parole officers actively concentrate on how offenders deal with the more mundane problems they face as a way for parole staff to measure and control the offender’s moods and emotional reactions.

Denise Gottfredson, David Wilson and Stacy Najaka, “The Schools,” Crime: Public Policies for Crime Control, James Q. Wilson and Joan Petersilia, eds., Institute for Contemporary Studies, 2002.

Gottfredson et al., note that a disproportionate amount of crime occurs in schools and in this chapter they examine what schools can do to prevent crime. Property crime is more prevalent than violent crime in schools. Males and younger students report more victimizations than females or older students. The “most promising strategies for dealing with crime in schools are those that are designed to change the school environment...instructional programs that teach self-control or social competency skills using cognitive-behavioral methods are also effective for reducing crime and substance abuse.” The authors found that the quality of implementation of many school based programs was “typically low.” The authors believe that a fruitful use of evaluation dollars is to develop program implementation standards against which actual implementation quality can be measured and then require fund recipients to collect data on compliance with the standards. The researchers found that little is known about the effectiveness of most of what schools do to prevent crime or drug abuse and many of the programs they employ “...are not likely to make a difference.” Gottfredson et al., found that the key to making good programs work in the schools is to focus on program fidelity during the implementation process.

ARIZONA JUVENILE JUSTICE TRIVIA ANSWER

This is an important issue that has been difficult for ADJC to measure. One accepted measure of juveniles with serious mental health issues is the number of juveniles receiving psychiatric medications. ADJC Behavioral/Medical Services staff estimated that at any given time, approximately 180 (25%) of juveniles in secure care were receiving psychiatric medications.